

REMARKS

This is in response to the action dated March 14, 2008.

1. Summary of Office Action

The action listed Claims 17, 18, 36, 37, 58 and 59 as being withdrawn. Applicant also withdrew Claim 8 pursuant to the paper dated December 6, 2006. Clarification is requested.

Claims 14, 15, 55 and 56 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Ishimaru et al. JP '076 ("Ishimaru") taken alone, or in combination with Dreyfus '152 ("Dreyfus").

Claims 30 and 53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Dreyfus and Ishimaru and further, in view of Yamamoto et al. JP '498.

Claim 71 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Dreyfus and Ishimaru and further, in view of Parkin '236 ("Parkin").

Claims 30 and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph for lack of antecedent basis for an element.

Claims 31, 33 and 34 were rejected but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1-13, 19, 20, 22-29, 32, 38, 39, 40-45, 47-52 54 and 60 are allowed.

2. Status of the Claims with Remarks

Allowable claims (according to the Office Action): 1-13, 19, 20, 22-29, 32, 38, 39, 42-45, 47-52, 54, and 60.

Clarification of the status of Claim 8 is requested.

Withdrawn claims: 8, 17, 18, 36, 37, 58-59, and 61-69.

Canceled claims (per the current Response): 16, 21, 31, 33-35, 40, 41, 57, 70 and 72.

Claim 14 has been combined with Claim 33, which was indicated as being allowable. Similarly, Claim 15 has been combined with Claim 34, which was indicated as being allowable. Therefore, Claims 14 and 15 should be allowed.

Claim 30 has been combined with Claim 31, which was indicated as being allowable. The antecedent basis rejection of Claim 30 has been addressed with an amendment. No new matter has been added. Therefore, Claim 30 should be allowed.

The antecedent basis rejection of Claim 46 has been addressed with an amendment. No new matter has been added. Therefore, Claim 46 should be allowed.

Claims 53, 55 and 56 all depend from allowable claims. Therefore, Claims 53, 55 and 56 should be allowed. It should be noted, in addition, that the hardness range of 20-45 (Shore OO) is equal to and below a Shore A hardness of 5 as shown in Table 1 below. Since the Examiner has indicated in allowing other claims with a Shore A hardness of 5 and below, a nipple with the range of 20-45 (Shore OO) as recited in Claims 53, 55 and 56, should also be allowable for the same reason.

Table 1

SHORE DUROMETER CONVERSION CHART					
A	B	C	D	O	OO
100	85	77	58		
95	81	70	46		
90	76	59	39		
85	71	52	33		
80	66	47	29	84	98
75	62	42	25	79	97
70	56	37	22	75	95
65	51	32	19	72	94
60	47	28	16	69	93
55	42	24	14	65	91
50	37	20	12	61	90
45	32	17	10	57	88
40	27	14	8	53	86
35	22	12	7	48	83

30	17	9	6	42	80
25	12			35	76
20	6			28	70
15				21	62
10				14	55
5				8	45

Claim 71 should be allowed for the same reason as Claims 53, 55 and 56. As noted above the hardness range of 20-45 (Shore OO) recited in Claim 71 is equal to and below a Shore A hardness of 5 as shown in Table 1 below. Since the Examiner has indicated in allowing other claims with a Shore A hardness of 5 and below, a nipple with the range of 20-45 (Shore OO), as recited in Claim 71 should also be allowable for the same reason.

Reconsideration is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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